

Life in Prison for 2016 Stabbing Death in Wilmington

Other defendants face prison time for murder, weapons, and robbery charges

A 50-year-old Wilmington man will spend the rest of his life in prison for the 2016 killing of his girlfriend. Deputy Attorneys General John Downs and Periann Doko secured the plea of Guilty but Mentally Ill to Murder First Degree and Possession of a Deadly Weapon During the Commission of a Felony from Robert Smith. In February 2016, Smith stabbed 45-year-old Inga Young to death with a screwdriver in a relative's home in the 2300 block of North Tatnall Street. A short time later, Smith, seen driving the victim's car, led police on a high speed chase on I-95 from Newark to Wilmington, and then through the city until he crashed into a State Police vehicle in the 1500 block of Linden Street. A Superior Court judge will sentence Smith to life in prison without probation or parole for the murder, plus an additional 2 to 25 years on the weapons charge in October.

A 21-year-old Wilmington man will spend the next 35 years in prison in connection with a 2015 murder in the city. Deputy Attorneys General Brian Robertson and Daniel McBride secured the sentence for Taushia Mitchell. In July 2015, Mitchell murdered 29-year-old James Rogers of Wilmington, shooting him in the head in Rogers's home in the 500 block of West 4th Street. Mitchell was arrested a week later while sitting in the victim's stolen car in New York City. In June of this year, Mitchell pled guilty to Murder Second Degree and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony. A Superior Court judge sentenced Mitchell to 35 years in prison, followed by 2 years of probation. Wilmington Police Detective Brian Conkey and DOJ paralegal Jaime Prater assisted with the case.

Deputy Attorneys General Erika Flaschner and John Taylor secured a guilty plea to weapons charges for a Wilmington man involved in a shooting earlier this year. Ahmed Ifill, 32, pled guilty to Possession of a Firearm by a Person Prohibited and Carrying a Concealed Deadly weapon. In January, Ifill fired shots into a group of people at standing at a memorial in the 300 block of New Castle Avenue, striking one man in the leg. Ifill is a habitual offender based on previous convictions for weapons and robbery charges and faces a minimum mandatory 25 years in prison when sentenced by a Superior Court judge in October.

Deputy Attorney General Kelly Sheridan secured a guilty plea from Michael Watson, 29, of Wilmington, on robbery and weapons charges. In September 2016, Watson, while wearing a disguise, demanded money at knifepoint from the cashier at the Speedy Gas station in the 1200 block of Capitol Trail in Newark. A few days later, Watson, again wearing a disguise and armed with a knife, robbed Westgate Liquors in the 4100 block of Newport Gap Pike in Hockessin. Watson pled guilty to Robbery First Degree, Possession of a Deadly Weapon During the Commission of a Felony, and Robbery Second Degree. Social worker Crystal Pitts and paralegal Julie Caputo assisted on the case. The chief investigating officer was Paul Doherty of Delaware State Police. Watson also pled guilty to Theft of a Firearm related to an incident from June 2016 during which he stole weapons from his father that he later sold. That case was prosecuted by Deputy Attorney General Anna Currier. Watson faces at least 5 years in prison when sentenced by a Superior Court judge in October.

A 45-year-old Newark man was sentenced by a Superior Court judge to 15 years in prison for a series of robberies. Deputy Attorney General Christina Kontis prosecuted the case against Leo Watson, with assistance from paralegal Lisa Loikith and social worker Donna Lindsey. In early June 2016, Watson robbed the Exxon gas station in the 5300 block of Concord Pike twice

in 2 days, the Dollar Tree in the 2000 block of Philadelphia Pike, and attempted to rob the Valero gas station in the 1300 block of McKennans Church Road. Watson displayed a crow bar during one of the robberies at the Exxon and a BB gun during the Dollar Tree robbery. The Court sentenced Watson to 15 years in prison, followed by 2 years of probation.